(c) the number of Jaguar fighter aircraft lost due to accidents during 2002-2003 and so far during 2004, year-wise;

(d) whether Government are considering any proposal to lay off these aircraft due to high accidents involving them ; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and how the shortfall in fighter aircraft is proposed to be made up?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The cause of the crash has not been established as the Court of Inquiry is still in progress.

(c) A total number of 03 Jaguar aircrafts were lost during the financial year 2002-2003, while 02 Jaguar aircrafts were lost during the financial year 2003-2004. In the current financial year 03 Jaguar aircrafts were lost in two accidents.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Indo-US Defence group meeting

797. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indo-US Defence group met in the month of June and discussed strategic issues and review counter terrorism requirements of India and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;

(b) whether US has shown its keenness on continuing close military ties with India;

(c) if so, whether US has offered missile defence and defence relating technology and combined military exercise;

(d) if so, whether new Government has already approved proposals of US and by what time final agreement is likely to be reached; and

(e) if so, the details of the same?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Indo-US Defence Group met in June, 2004 and reviewed ongoing defence

relations and initiatives, the global and regional security situation within the framework of evolving relations between India and the US. These included a review of the status of ongoing exchanges to meet India's counter-terrorism requirements. The issue of proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction was touched on in a general way as one of the areas of concern of the US and India.

(b) The US as well as India indicated keenness to continue the ongoing military relations between the US and the Indian Armed Forces in mutual interest.

(c) The US provided a briefing on the US Ballistic Missile Defence Programme. No specific offer for supply of missile defence technology was made nor sought. The meeting also discussed proposals in relation to defence-related technology. Combined military exercises are an integral aspect of India-US military-to-military relations.

(d) and (e) There are no specific proposals to which the Government has responded as yet.

Induction of Admiral Gorshkov in Navy

798. SHRI S.P.M.SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have concluded a package deal for the induction of aircraft carrier 'Admiral Gorshkov';

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any payment has been released; and

(d) what is the proposed date of induction and delivery of the platforms?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) Contracts and Supplementary Agreements were signed with Russia on 20th January 2004 for the induction of the Aircraft Carrier "Admiral Gorshkov". These relate to repair and re-equipping, logistic supports, shore infrastructure, training of ship's crew, repair and technical documents etc.

An amount of Rs. 449.29 crores has been so far released for the Aircraft Carrier;

The Aircraft Carrier is scheduled to be delivered by August 2008.